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ART. IX. — *Chronicles of the First Planters of the Colony of Massachusetts Bay, in New England, from 1623 to 1635. Now first collected from Original Records and Contemporaneous Manuscripts, and illustrated with Notes.* By ALEXANDER YOUNG. Boston: Little & Brown. 1846. 8vo. pp. 560.

THE publication, at successive periods, of contemporaneous documents relating to any historical event puts a reader more and more into the position of an original eyewitness and party. Documents not intended for publication are generally the richest materials of history ; and it is a well established principle among its writers, that public annals and records will never serve by themselves for a sufficient, or even for an accurate, memorial of the past. The historian, almost as much as the biographer, needs the aid of what are called private papers, family registers, letters, note-books, journals, and the fly-leaves of pamphlets, to illustrate and explain the great folio records in print or in manuscript. The second publication or reëditing of a historical document may also give a double value to it. The time which has elapsed since it was first printed has written a commentary upon it, has verified or contradicted its statements, has witnessed the publication of other documents relating to the same scenes and actors, and while it has shown some of the consequences of former events, it has allowed shadows to gather around them which only the concentration of many rays of light can pierce.

It has often been observed of the annals of the North American Colonies in general, and of those of New England in particular, that they are wholly free from fable, and begin at the very beginning with most authentic materials. This truth is well understood, but it is regarded more as a negative than as a positive fact. The fables are thankfully missed ; but gratitude and admiration have not made a sufficient acknowledgment for the mass of original papers which authenticate New England history. It is wonderful that so many records relating to its first settlers and their plantations should have been made ; it is more wonderful still, that so large a portion of them should have escaped the hazards of time, till they could be permanently secured. Indeed, we are persuaded

that a good argument, were such needed, to establish many honorable distinctions and claims for our fathers, and to assure their faith in the proud results of their mean beginnings, might be raised from the fact that they recorded so much about their own childhood, with its exposures, its fears, and its imperfections. They seem to have known that what they were doing and suffering was worthy of being written down ; and while no one of their papers which has as yet come to light betrays any ambition for notoriety then, or for applause afterwards, it may still be said of all of them, that candor and truthfulness, the most specific statement of their views and principles, and a readiness to meet the judgment of the whole world for all time, are the most striking characteristics of every page.

It may likewise be stated, to the credit of our fathers and in large extenuation of their errors, that they practised no concealment. It is from their own writings that their calumniators or accusers obtain all their facts and charges. They did nothing in a corner. Those who suffered by their acts of alleged oppression and bigotry had not to do with sneaking, cowardly persecutors, who were afraid to confess their deeds or to offer their reasons. Scarcely could a sufferer by their intolerance make his way in banishment or flight to the court or the press at London, to tell his tale to their discredit, before the full story was told by the colonists themselves, without loss or addition, at the same bar of royalty or of popular judgment. Their usurpation of certain civil privileges and ecclesiastical functions, which it was not intended they should enjoy, was neither hidden nor denied. They allowed it all, and readily undertook the office of justifying it either by bold inferences from their patent, or by the necessities of their condition. They never even denied that they had made audacious trespass upon the exclusive rights of royalty, by establishing a mint in Boston and coining money there ; though their agent at court, taking the sin upon his own soul, ventured to tell Charles the Second, that the pine-tree on the Massachusetts shilling, which the king looked at with amazed distrust, was an effigies of the famous tree thus happily commemorated in "the New England Primer, adorned with cuts" : —

"The royal Oak, it was the Tree  
That saved his Royal Majesty."

Neither the Brownes of Salem, nor Roger Williams, nor Mrs. Hutchinson, nor the Baptists, nor the Quakers, have related so much tending to the discredit of the Massachusetts rulers in church and state, as may be collected from these magistrates' own writings. Their infirmities and inconsistencies are detailed by themselves. Their records are brief, but they are numerous. For nearly every important question which we can ask about the fathers of Massachusetts, we can find an answer ; there is scarcely an event or circumstance relating to them the date of which is unknown or doubtful. Their own records of various kinds were in general kept with much more fidelity than were those of their descendants of the third or fourth generation. But an immense amount of literary and antiquarian labor has been necessarily spent upon their original documents. The records of courts, of towns and churches, family registers and grave-stones, letters and diaries, interleaved almanacs and last wills, merely afford materials which by diligent toil may be wrought up into annals and biographies. Considering that no reward of money, and scarcely any of fame, offers incitement to this labor, we may wonder at its amount and its accumulations. Mr. James Savage has been unrivalled among the antiquarians of Massachusetts, and richly deserves his place as president of its Historical Society. What he has not done for all who follow in his track, he has taught them how to do. Prince is the only one who should be mentioned before him, and this rather because he preceded Mr. Savage in time ; for the results of Prince's labors stop just where we begin to need them most. Mr. Savage's edition of Governor Winthrop's Journal is a miracle of industry, of acuteness, and of pains-taking research. His Gleanings for New England History, gathered during a recent visit to Old England, fill out many blanks left in the memorials of persons, places, and events, besides affording a sum of particulars which are of a general value in illustrating our annals. They are literally "Gleanings," — requiring for their collection a survey of the whole field, and abundantly rewarding it.

The two volumes which Mr. Young has given to the public, taken in connection with Mr. Savage's edition of Winthrop, embrace every original and authentic document relating to the early history of Massachusetts. Mr. Young has devoted a volume to each of the ancient and separate Colonies of

Plymouth and the Bay, which now are united in this State. "The Chronicles of the Pilgrim Fathers of the Colony of Plymouth, from 1602 to 1625, now first collected from Original Records and Contemporaneous printed Documents, and illustrated with Notes," was published in 1841, and soon reached a second edition. It can never be superseded, but will henceforward have its place in all public and private libraries as a complete history of the fathers and the beginnings of the Old Colony. The plan of the work is perfectly suited to fulfil its purpose. We are carried by it into the company of those venerable and strong-hearted men and women. We listen to their deliberations and prayers when the project was first entertained among them of seeking a refuge beyond the ocean. We participate in their frequent crosses and their few comforts. We admire their pious magnanimity, and read over and over again each sentence which expresses their sufferings and their constancy. With the help of the notes which the editor, with great industry and most extensive research, has appended to their own records, the early days of these colonists come again before us. The bleak wilderness wears its ancient aspect, while the grave looks of the exiles are turned upon it, and their serious lips open to give names to headlands, rivers, and swamps, and to cheer one another around the smoking ruins of their first common dwelling, or the frosty burial-spot which has given graves to one half of their company.

The volume now before us is a labor of love of the same character in behalf of the old Bay Colony. No other State in the Union, no other colony, no other country, in the world, can produce such records of its origin as Massachusetts possesses in this volume. Here we have not only the public documents of courts and companies, containing the public history of the origin and plantation of the Colony, but the Journals, Diaries, Memoirs, and Letters of the prime movers in the enterprise. These private papers admit us behind the scenes, and into the homes where our fathers conferred with each other and with their wives and children. We have the means of deciding whether they were led hither by an obstinate and over-scrupulous zeal, and a mercenary, trafficking spirit, as some of their enemies then averred, (and they have since reiterated the charge,) or whether the purest motives which can be felt in a human breast moved them to their painful self-exile, and

gave them the fortitude without which the prisons and graves of England would have had more attraction for them than the free wildernesses of America. Doubtless their story has been told often enough to meet the claims of historic truth, and to vindicate their own good name. Still, we have mistaken the spirit of much that has been said and written of late among us, if we have not rightly inferred that detraction has renewed its attacks upon them. It may be only that some have grown weary of the theme ; but we submit that ridicule and sneers are not the most Christian, nor the most commendable, expressions of a distaste for the exaggerations and the fulsome and indiscriminating encomiums which have been spent upon the Pilgrim Fathers. Their story truly and simply told is praise enough, and never will weary a real lover of truth.

Only a small portion of the text of this volume appears here in print for the first time ; but this fact hardly lessens the value of the collection. The documents composing it are twenty-four in number, all of them written by actual movers or participators in the settlements in Massachusetts Bay ; not one of them is anonymous, or apocryphal, or questionable in its authorship. For the most part, they are printed from the original documents, and, except Governor Winthrop's Journal, they embrace every thing of a historical character which is now known to be extant, from the pens of the first planters. The documents are collected from all quarters, a few of them have never before been printed, and of those which were in print, some were inaccessible to the mass of readers, and others, through the carelessness or impatience of former transcribers of the manuscripts, were published in an inaccurate or imperfect form. They are all chronologically arranged, and accompanied by a body of notes serving to illustrate whatever, by the lapse of time or other causes, had become obscure or unintelligible. The biographical notices are numerous and condensed, requiring extensive inquiries for their preparation. Notes in some books and on some subjects are an intolerable nuisance to a reader, being sometimes more properly entitled to a place in the text, the continuity of which they interrupt, but more commonly not entitled to a place in any part of the volume. In Mr. Young's volumes, his abundant notes are absolutely essential. They give direct and sufficient answers to questions which rise naturally as we

read the text, and their completeness and variety double the value of the documents. We feel the more bound to say this, because, while first perusing the book, we felt hastily moved to say something to the contrary. When we were so often referred to the bottom or the middle of a page, to be informed of the population of English towns and cities, and their distances from London, from seaports, and from each other, we were tempted to ask, Why is this? But we now understand that their purpose is to remind or inform all readers, in an indirect way, of the characters and social position of the fathers of Massachusetts, of the bonds which linked their sympathies together while they lived wide apart at home, of the places where their views were entertained, and of the distances which they travelled to meet one another in their necessary arrangements, or to reach the seaports. Some of these travellers, like the famous ministers John Cotton and Richard Mather, were compelled not only to go long distances, but to conceal themselves from pursuivants.

A mere enumeration of the documents which compose this volume, with very brief remarks, followed, like the sermons of their authors, with a few suggestions by way of improvement, is the object which we now propose to ourselves. The first document, called *The Planter's Plea*, is from a small quarto volume written by the Rev. John White, of Dorchester, England, printed at London, 1630. Though he never came hither himself, Mr. White first moved our fathers to the enterprise. His intimacy with them and his knowledge of all their plans give to his record the highest authority. Yet, strange to say, his little book was not used or mentioned by either Mather, Prince, Hutchinson, Bancroft, or Grahame. Mr. Young takes this extract from it for the sake of its methodical and accurate statement of facts relating to the earliest attempts, made first in fishing and trading voyages, and then by a colony, to establish a permanent settlement in Massachusetts Bay. The second document is the preliminary narrative given in Hubbard's *History*, relating to the first settlements at Cape Ann and Salem. The whole history has been printed in the *Collections of the Massachusetts Historical Society*; but Mr. Young's extract, copied from the original manuscript, corrects many errors, and embraces the most original and valuable portion of its contents, which the Ipswich minister probably derived from the high

authority of Roger Conant. The third chapter or document in these Chronicles contains a complete manuscript, now first printed, of the original records of the Governor and Company of the Massachusetts Bay in New England, up to the time when the charter was brought over by Governor Winthrop. The most trifling particulars recorded herein are of high interest. The meetings of the company in England, the names of those interested and present, their deliberations, plans, and efforts, the cautious and serious spirit which guided them, are fully presented. We have even the lists of articles for apparel, subsistence, and common use, which formed the freight of the first ships.

Next, we have, under date of February 16, 1629, a letter from Cradock, governor of the company in England, to Endicott, who presided over the first body of emigrants which came under its direction to Salem. The fifth and sixth chapters contain two general letters of instructions from the company to Endicott and his council. These are followed by four chapters, containing respectively the form of government for the colony, the allotment of lands, the oaths, and the agreement with the ministers. All these documents came from the meetings of the court of the company in England, and show, in their exact method and careful elaboration, that serious work was thought to be in hand.

We find next the journal of his passage in 1629, kept by the Rev. Francis Higginson, of Salem, and his graphic description of the "commodities and discommodities" of the country, written, with some help of poetry, to draw others hither. The only specimen of humor which the whole volume affords is found in this latter piece of Higginson's. Writing about our Indians, he observes, — "Their hair is generally black, and cut before, like our gentlewomen, and one lock longer than the rest, much like to our gentlemen, which fashion I think came from hence into England." It was probably under some conflict of sensations about the past and the present, that the good minister wrote, that "a sup of New England's air is better than a whole draught of Old England's ale." The next chapter is a curious paper, probably drawn up by Governor Winthrop, containing "General Considerations for the Plantation of New England; with an Answer to several Objections." This is followed by the shortest, though the most pregnant, document in the volume;



“ The True Copy of the Agreement at Cambridge [Old England], August 26, 1629,” solemnly signed by honorable men pledging themselves to embark for the colony. Chapter fifteenth contains the company's letters to the ministers and Governor Endicott, relating to the affair of the Brownes, who wished to introduce the Common Prayer Book at Salem, and were summarily sent home. The records of the company abundantly prove that every effort was made to do strict justice in this case. Next follows a most tender and beautiful piece, entitled, The Company's Humble Request, written and signed by the exiles “ late gone for New England ” to win prayers and kind feelings from “ the rest of their brethren in and of the Church of England.”

Deputy-Governor Dudley's Letter to the Countess of Lincoln makes the seventeenth chapter. In his own words of touching eloquence addressed to that noble lady, whose children shared his wilderness fortune, he writes from New England, — “ I have, in the throng of domestic, and not altogether free from public business, thought fit to commit to memory our present condition, and what hath befallen us since our arrival here ; which I will do shortly, after my usual manner, and must do rudely, having yet no table, nor other room to write in than by the fireside upon my knee, in this sharp winter.” His whole letter accords with this purpose. Then comes the pious Autobiography of Captain Roger Clap, of Dorchester, written to kindle holy and grateful sentiments in the hearts of his posterity. The nineteenth document is a transcript from the earliest pages of the records of the town of Charlestown, which was settled at an earlier day than Boston. The description of Massachusetts in 1633, from William Wood's New England Prospect, making chapter twentieth, is far more accurate in its topography and other matters than are the works of ninety-nine out of every hundred of the tourists of the present day. A brief sketch of the life, and some of the original letters, of John Cotton ; the Journal of Richard Mather, of Dorchester, which seems to have come to light just in season to pass from manuscript into print in this volume ; the heart-rending but beautifully written narrative of Anthony Thacher's shipwreck, on an island now bearing his name, written by himself ; and the Autobiography of Thomas Shepard, of Cambridge, complete these Chronicles.

Such are the rich and varied contents of the second volume of Mr. Young's *Chronicles*. The original documents, taken in connection with his notes, make up a book which its possessors will highly prize. These are the authentic records of which Massachusetts may boast ; no son of hers will wish to erase a line. We proceed to the improvement of them.

There is one particular in which we must qualify a previous remark as to the fulness and authenticity of our knowledge of the first occupation of New England by white men. There is a mystery hanging over the earliest English adventurers about Massachusetts Bay, which, so far as it concerns the individuals themselves, will probably never be removed. In all our early records, we meet with frequent mention of certain persons designated as "Old Planters." The first associated adventurers found those who answered to this title when they came here, and though they had every means of learning their history, they have left us no information concerning them. Roger Conant at Salem, Walford at Charlestown, Maverick at Noddle's Island, and Blackstone at Boston, were the persons who bore this designation of "Old Planters." We do not know the private history of either of these lonely wanderers, nor the time of their respective arrivals, nor the inducements which led them hither. There is certainly some little romance investing their wilderness experiences. With the exception of Walford, who appears to have been of loose and unscrupulous, if not of a positively immoral, character,—all that is known of them is to their credit. They could not, therefore, have been refugees from justice ; neither were they treasure-hunters seeking after mines and easy fortunes. Conant, Maverick, and Blackstone are uniformly mentioned with esteem, saving only that Maverick was thought to be too liberal in his hospitality, which was not wholly free from jollity. Conant made common cause with the associated emigrants at Salem, and joined their fellowship. He was the first actual occupant of Massachusetts Bay, the father of the first child born at Salem, and he received a grant of land when he was fourscore years of age, on the ground of his being "an ancient planter." He reached his eighty-seventh year, and died in 1679, having been more than half a century in the Bay.

Samuel Maverick was found, in 1630, comfortably seated on Noddle's Island, which he had fortified ; and the first mention of him records his allowed generosity in entertaining all comers *gratis*. He was a man of sufficient means, of good character, though far from agreeing with the new comers in their religious views, and was, we believe, the first possessor of an African slave in North America. But whence and when he came here we know not. William Blackstone had probably resided on the peninsula of Boston since 1625. He had been an Episcopal minister, and though by no means attached to the Lords Bishop, he appears to have had an equal dislike to the Lords Brethren. After Boston had been occupied by the new-comers about five years, and Blackstone had resided here at least ten, he sold all his rights and claims, and moved away for retirement and quiet. He was a studious man, possessing a library large for the time and place ; he was not contentious, neither had he any open collision with his countrymen. But a mystery hangs over him likewise. For a curious and instructive note about him, we refer our readers to Mr. Young's volume.

Other old planters there were here, of less note ; but these four, living apart from each other, of very different tastes and characters, finding their happiness and subsistence in their own chosen way, are the almost mythical personages of early Massachusetts history. They must have loved solitude, but they could not have been luxurious idlers. Mr. Young has not been able by the help of his researches to communicate any further information concerning either of these old planters. He suggests, that they all probably came over in some of the fishing-vessels that were constantly hovering on the coast. This is undoubtedly so ; but whether they came originally to fish, and straggled from their respective parties, or purposely sought an abode here, allured by the exciting scenes of a new region, we can now scarcely hope to know.

This leads us to mention, that those who made the permanent settlements in Massachusetts Bay were not the first companies of English adventurers who had sounded these waters. After Captain John Smith (who, we believe, was the first historical person to bear a name which has ceased to be a name when considered as defining a person), had opened this harbour to the English, fishing-vessels came to the Banks and to Cape Ann every year. Many successive enterprises

had terminated disastrously. It was found impracticable to carry out any plan which connected planting with a fishing voyage ; for the shoals and rocks which harboured the fish would yield no other sustenance. Yet the skill and expense which had been given to these undertakings were not wasted. As the patriarch White says of them, — “ Nothing new fell out in the managing of this stock, seeing experience hath taught us, that, as in building houses, the first stones of the foundation are buried under ground and are not seen, so in planting colonies, the first stocks employed that way are consumed, although they serve for a foundation to the work.”

These fishing voyages made the sailors and shipmasters acquainted with the way across the ocean, with the harbours, soundings, and coast of New England, with the language and habits of the natives, and led to the erection of drying-frames, booths, sheds, and other shelters, which brought hither the first tokens of civilization. There had been five abortive attempts to plant colonies in New England, between 1607 and 1625. These were undertaken with sole reference to the fisheries and a barter trade with the Indians. The vessels that came hither remained only long enough to prepare the fish upon the salting and drying-frames, or to change their cargoes. It was soon found, that a long delay upon the coast was attended with great expense of wages and provisions ; and the project was devised of leaving a portion of the men to fish while the vessels returned. Great hardships, exposures, and bodily privations were endured upon our cold rocks by those who ventured to undertake this service. We cannot but feel a great respect for the old shipmasters who engaged in these enterprises. Often they had but crazy vessels, and the poor accommodations were overburdened by crowded companies. Yet we are amazed at the small number of great disasters which are recorded. The task of unlading or relading a vessel in these waters, without the help of wharves or barges, across salt marshes or long beaches, called out all the energies of patience and perseverance which the mariners possessed, and made equal drafts upon their brains and their muscles. Indeed, were imagination to construct its visions only from the facts which are known concerning these adventurers, our earliest history would be an interchange of tragedy and comedy.

It is evident, however, that men who might serve for

fishermen and adventurers would not be of the most promising sort to undertake the settlement of a permanent colony, under unpropitious circumstances, and to transfer to it the better influences of civilized society. Had no other purposes than fishing or the peltry trade presented themselves to the inhabitants of Old England, the last two centuries might perhaps have made our bay as much of a harbour as it now is, and might have multiplied the tokens of human life upon our coasts ; but the scene along our shores would never have worn the aspect it now has to our eyes. Large wealth was to be brought here, before any could go forth, or even be found upon the soil, or in trade. Money may have been one of the least requisites for a permanent settlement ; but it was indispensable, and it did its full part. Though, as a speculation, the enterprise was altogether unprofitable to the charter company, yet it was singly with a view to profit that this company was formed in England. The stock proprietors did not entertain the idea of transferring the government hither, still less of transporting themselves as permanent exiles. The original design of the English adventurers who obtained a royal patent to territory in New England was precisely the same as that which began, and has ever since attached to, the honorable East India Company. But wealth of another sort than that of the purse availed itself of the opportunity to turn a trading colony into a permanent Christian commonwealth, of actual residents, making for themselves a home. The project of converting New England from a place for mercantile speculations into a land of civil, religious, and domestic institutions was an afterthought, born of a pious and Christian zeal. The first suggestion of this project undoubtedly came from the Rev. John White, " usually called," says Anthony Wood, " patriarch of Dorchester, or Patriarch White," who seems to have had equal influence with the Episcopal and the Puritanical portion of the Church of England, and whose name frequently occurs in the records of the meetings of the Massachusetts Company in England. After the design moved by him began to be entertained, it soon grew into a warm and devoted purpose. It is easy to trace in the records of the company the growth and more frequent utterance of that religious spirit which animated, and, beyond all question, fulfilled, the great undertaking. We observe, too, the sifting process which winnowed out the men.

The great civil basis of the chartered plantations made in New England was a patent signed by King James, November 3d, 1620, by which the merchant adventurers to the northern colony of Virginia, between forty and forty-eight degrees north latitude, were incorporated as "The Council established at Plymouth, in the County of Devon, for the planting, ruling, ordering, and governing of New England, in America." This council, by a deed under the common seal, dated March 19th, 1628 (N. S.), sold to another mercantile company "that part of New England that lies between Merrimack and Charles River, in the bottom of the Massachusetts Bay." Then, by the influence of Mr. White, these purchasers "were brought into acquaintance with several other religious persons of like quality in and about London, such as Mr. Winthrop, Mr. Johnson, Mr. Dudley, Mr. Cradock, Mr. Goffe, and Sir Richard Saltonstall; who, being first associated with them, at last bought of them all their right and interest in New England aforesaid." It was by these gentlemen, their associates, and servants, who were members of the Church of England, though troubled with scruples about its ceremonies, and craving more freedom for themselves without wrong to others, that the settlements in the Bay Colony were effected. They took care to have their patent ratified and its liberties enlarged by the king.

As soon as the religious spirit obtained ascendancy in the new company, the purpose of transporting themselves and their families was heartily entertained. This was the most serious matter which could possibly have engaged their minds. Their deliberations upon it have the highest interest to us, because this is, in fact, the most critical point in Massachusetts, or New England, history. The characters and deeds of our fathers are to be estimated by the honest standard of judgment thus furnished us. They did not undertake to open an asylum like that which Rome afforded in its early days. They did not invite the adventurous, the roving, the discontented, and the fortune-hunting, still less the debauched, the profligate, and the criminal, to an El Dorado or a "Merry Mount." They extended no inducements, they opened no door of entrance, to the fanatical or eccentric dreamers and thinkers who abounded at that time in England. Religious liberty, in the sense in which it is now understood, was then only conceived in the womb of time, not born even

in the thoughts of statesmen or divines. Even the theory of it was not intrusted to our fathers, any more than was the theory of the steam-engine or the magnetic telegraph. What folly and injustice, then, are involved in a judgment instituted against them on the ground that they did not adopt unborn wisdom, and principles of civil and religious policy which have required two centuries since their day for even a partial recognition ! Had our fathers opened here the free asylum which many of their modern calumniators seem to think was the end of their enterprise, they would have verified in their own experience the old adage of "jumping from the frying-pan into the fire." Their estates and their tempers were scorched at home ; but they would have been burned up here. They would have crossed the ocean to place themselves in a situation of anarchy, discord, and distracting confusion. Even in the settlement of William Penn's colony, under the light of a half-century of advanced trial of principles, some exclusive rights were recognized, some religious favoritism was exercised, and all the increased freedom there enjoyed was attended with dissensions and misfortunes greater even than those which occurred in Massachusetts.

The views and intentions which our fathers are censured for not discarding were, in fact, the real promptings of their exile. Had they not been influenced by them, they would have remained in England. They could hear ranters in religion and no-government men in politics there, without exchanging their estates for rocks and sand-hills in America, and inviting all sorts of discontents and vagabonds to come here and erect another tower of Babel. The simple truth is, that certain religious and high-minded men in England, possessing fair estates, finding themselves of one way of thinking, united together in the purchase of a large farm, with some mill-streams, many rocks, a fishing-coast, and the chances of trade with the Indians. They thought it would be a good place for them to inhabit and improve, that they might enjoy in it their own views of religion and of morals, governing themselves by certain institutions of their own, which were not to be inconsistent with the laws of England. They exchanged good soil for hard soil, comforts for crosses, hoping also to escape from a state of constant annoyance to a condition of lasting and pure repose. They bought their strip of territory of the original patentees, and they bought it

again of the feeble remnant of the Indian tribes which a devastating plague had left over its graves. From the moment when they thus gained possession, all adventurers and interlopers and theorists, whether of the sort of Sir Christopher Gardiner, or of that of Roger Williams, might as fairly be debarred a lodging-place, as they might be excluded from a private house at this day. There were other sand-banks and granite ledges free to those who wished to occupy them. Our fathers had the same right to regulate their civil and religious institutions after their own pattern as the father of a family has to dispose the order of his household, and to pray and teach by his fireside, and as the communicants or worshippers in a church have to appoint a creed and a code of discipline for themselves. Indeed, our fathers used no right or liberty in their strictness which the members of a "Fourierite community" do not use in their looseness. The company in England not only acted according to their light, but they legislated within the limits of their lawful and unquestionable privileges. They selected ministers to teach them in their exile. But they made themselves acquainted with the opinions and spirit of those ministers, as if they had been choosing domestic chaplains; and they required of those ministers signed and sealed agreements about the terms of their office, their duties, and their income. The company employed servants, transported them for so many pounds each man, and provided their diet and clothing; not, however, with the intention of making their servants their masters. The purchasers of this New England farm, with its fishing and trading privileges, with its native rocks and mullen-stalks, likewise drew up solemn and formal oaths of office for its governor, deputy-governor, and their assistants; and soon after the enterprise was in hand, they drew up an oath, to be sworn to by every person who wished to have a vote in their courts, requiring, at the same time, that such a voter should be the communicant of a church. This Freeman's Oath was one of the thorns which troubled the conscience of Roger Williams. The alternative for him evidently was to keep his conscience out of its reach. It was certainly unreasonable for him to expect to enjoy great privileges at the expense of others.

Such we conceive to be a homely but fair statement of the views, intentions, and rights of our fathers, when they came to



take possession of their farm, thrice purchased, — by money, from the patentees, — by enterprise, devotion, and outlay of their own, — by valuables and kind services, from the Indians. They no more designed to erect an asylum for all sorts of consciences, than a man, when building his cottage, expects to admit into it the inmates of the poor-house, the insane hospital, and the institution for the blind. They wanted a well ordered house and a pleasant sanctuary. If they were not entitled to one of their own choice, if they did not pay its full purchase, let their rights be questioned on these grounds ; but let them not be traduced for their honest endeavours to escape from the wiles of Satan, while they consecrated themselves to the service of God.

While Mr. Cradock was governor of the company in England, and Mr. Endicott was its agent at Salem, the proposition to transfer the government and charter to New England was first made at the court, July 28, 1629, by the governor himself. It came from him with great seriousness and caution, as a suggestion of his own ; but doubtless he had conferred upon the subject with the most zealous of his associates. We may well conceive, that faces always serious then wore their most serious aspect. It was a proposition of great significance, and occasioned much debate. The result was, that all present were instructed to think upon it privately, “and to set down their particular reasons in writing, *pro et contra*, and to produce the same at the next General Court ; where they being reduced to heads, and maturely considered of, the company may then proceed to a final resolution thereon. And in the mean time, they are desired to carry this business secretly, that the same be not divulged.” Two days before the meeting of the next court, the agreement already referred to as the fourteenth document in these Chronicles had been signed at Cambridge by those intending to embark for New England. These gentlemen were anxious to have the governor's proposition carried into effect, and the court appointed two committees to draw up reasons for and against it, to confer together, and to present the result the next day to the whole company. The result, in full court, was “the general consent of the company that the government and patent should be settled in New England, and accordingly an order to be drawn up.”

Many discussions have been raised concerning the legality

of this bold decision. The court certainly had no precedent to justify them, nor has their decision ever been followed as a precedent. The most remarkable fact of all is that the king silently acquiesced in it. Many important matters needed to be discussed and disposed of, in carrying this great design into execution, and they were all fully treated and settled without a word of discord. The secrecy which was enjoined may have been recommended solely on grounds of common discretion, to guard against that notoriety and public discussion which might in many ways embarrass the enterprise, by drawing to it some undesirable persons, by increasing the cost of necessaries in shipping or freight, by causing collisions with enemies, or by inviting too close a scrutiny by the public officials. Or the sole reason of this secrecy may have been a conviction, that the company had no lawful right to transfer its government and charter to New England. At the next court of the company for elections, and the last which was held in England, Mr. John Winthrop was chosen governor. The last record of the Massachusetts Company in the Old World was made "at a Court of Assistants, March 23, 1630 (N. S.), aboard the *Arbella*." A fleet of four ships was then riding at Cowes, with the newly elected magistrates of the wilderness colony, waiting for a fair wind to carry them. On board the *Arbella*, with Winthrop, was the charter, engrossed on parchment, bearing the heavy seal of royalty. He would not cross the seas without it. It was afterwards frequently demanded from the colonists, but it never returned to the realm and monarch of England. It hangs suspended now, as a time-honored relic, venerable and valued, in the chambers of the Secretary of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

Before the arrival of Winthrop with the full powers of the government, there had been two emigrations to the Bay, under the authority and patronage of the company in England. The first was made by Endicott and about sixty individuals, to Salem, September 6, 1628, where he was joined by some of the stray adventurers and fishermen who had been left about Cape Ann and the neighbourhood, thus making up a band of a hundred souls. The second emigration accompanied the Rev. Francis Higginson, who arrived June 27, 1629. Winthrop led the third and principal body of colonists, and gave permanence to an enterprise which heretofore had not been free from dubiousness and peril. This, there-

fore, is to be taken as the true date of the colonization of Massachusetts Bay. Settlements were made almost simultaneously at Charlestown, Boston, Roxbury, Cambridge, and Watertown, and, four years afterwards, at Dorchester. The fathers of the Bay Colony differed both in religious sentiments and social standing from the Pilgrims at Plymouth. With two or three exceptions, the Old Colony exiles were yeomen and Separatists, while the Massachusetts proprietors were gentlemen of landed estates, of some pretensions on the score of family descent and noble connections, and they retained their union with the Church of England, by communing with its members, though "they scrupled at first its ceremonies, and then its prelacy." The distinctions between the founders of the two colonies, though never causing animosity or strife, and very soon merged, were by no means trifling or overlooked in the first generation. It is a somewhat remarkable fact, that they adopted the same form of church polity. The boundary line between the two colonies is drawn upon the new State map.

The documents composing the *Chronicles* now before us are the records of an associated company and of individuals who were parties to its great enterprise. We have in them, therefore, abundant means of estimating the general and the particular characteristics of the founders of this colony. Brief as they are, and filled with references to very many matters and persons, they contain a connected history, and teach, after a plain way, the Puritan views of religion and policy. We have said, that their own records are the sources whence are gathered the facts, opinions, and incidents which are alleged against them. We believe that these records also afford to every judicious and moderate advocate of the Puritans the means of answering every charge against them which is mere slander, and of softening those censures to which individuals among them may be amenable. We are no indiscriminate eulogists of these men. We frankly confess, that, with our present opinions, views, and habits, we much prefer that they should have been our ancestors, to having them for contemporaries. In some respects they were sour and ungenial men. Their taste for an unintermitted and excessive ministration of preaching and prayer was morbid. Life in their households was not relieved by gentle graces, nor by wise relaxations, nor by humane indulgences. They dis-

tressed themselves with superstitions. They made a great deal of mischief and unhappiness for each other by intermeddling with consciences and opinions. They doubled by their laws and institutions the number of the sins which may be committed against God and duty. But when the most is made of these just abatements of the high merit of the Puritans, one who has acquainted himself with their memorials and views will readily allow them, and still keep the balance of high esteem and renown upon their side.

We have already made a passing reference to that just point of view whence the fathers of Massachusetts are to be studied in their own light. They have been criticised as if they had before them an end very different from that which actually led them ; the true course would be to show that the object which Patriarch White proposed to them, and which they devotedly and faithfully pursued, was unworthy and sure to lead them astray. If this can be done, then may these Puritan exiles stand condemned for folly ; and their ardent desire for a Christian commonwealth across the seas, composed of willing members and governed by laws of their own making, will pass for the spirit which their adversaries attribute to them, — a spirit of obstinacy when under restraint, and of persecuting intolerance when in power. We recognize no slight difference in mind and temper between the original stock of exiles from England, and their children of the first and second generations born on this soil. We should not care to appear as champions of the latter in all their views or measures. Yet for all the increase, rather than mitigation, of the Puritan harshness exhibited by them, they may find large excuses in their circumstances and education. They had not enjoyed the generous and expansive influences which Old England dispensed to her children ; they had not read her classics and poets, nor seen her venerable halls and libraries. They had been nurtured amid privations and hardships ; they had imbibed some little of moroseness with the poor fare which fed them ; they had no milk in their infancy ; they had been reared under very grim religious teachings, and had not been educated for a state of much religious freedom. The dying warnings of their parents rang in their ears, bidding them beware of apostasy, or of falling from their first love.

We do not wish to pursue into particulars a theme which is

somewhat ungracious. We have dropped this hint merely to deprecate a too common perversion and confusion of facts, when the Puritan fathers of Massachusetts are not only judged by a standard of which they never dreamed, but are made answerable for the errors of their posterity. We would remind some rather careless readers and more ready contemnors of their history, that one generation had passed away in Massachusetts before a Quaker was hung on Boston Common. We very much question whether Winthrop, or Cotton, or Saltonstall, or Higginson, or Johnson, or Shepard, would have been a party to that scene. Yet it should also be stated, for the sake of the actual executioners, that no one was ever put to death even by them for being a Quaker, but for committing under that name outrages, indecencies, and provocations utterly inconsistent with the peace of any society, and punished at this day in prisons and madhouses. There are two sides to every story, and the judge in a civilized tribunal never dismisses a jury to make up their verdict till both parties have pleaded, and their testimony and pleas have been candidly reviewed. Let the authentic records now placed by Mr. Young within the reach of our schools and families be taken as the free-spoken witnesses for our fathers. Let the ages which have passed, the prosperity which smiles over their resting-places, and the fruits from the seeds of their planting, test the sincerity and the worth of their design; their descendants may then be qualified to judge them. The bell, book, and candle, which are ominous symbols in the Roman Church, have another meaning among the Puritans.

These *Chronicles* of the Massachusetts fathers put into the hands of their descendants the means of answering three of the most aggravated and oft-repeated censures upon them. With a brief reference to each of them we shall conclude these remarks.

The first charge against the colonists of Massachusetts, covering, indeed, nearly all the colonists of North America, is that of injustice practised toward the native Indian tribes. In the romances and poems, and in some of the veritable histories most in circulation, this charge is brought against our fathers, that they seized upon the Indian's lands, or made at best but a Jew's bargain with him, and punished his untaught, savage instincts by the total extinction of his race. It is far from our purpose to array all the facts which bear upon this

charge. We turn only to the precious Chronicles before us, and find abundant evidence of the most honorable and Christian endeavours on the part of the colonists to treat the Indians in all respects as children of the same God as themselves. We omit, for want of space, the first beautiful and touching mention of them in Governor Cradock's letter to Captain Endicott, and turn to the first general instructions sent to him by authority of the whole court.

“ And above all, we pray you be careful that there be none in our precincts permitted to do any injury, in the least kind, to the heathen people ; and if any offend in that way, let them receive due correction. And we hold it fitting you publish a proclamation to that effect, by leaving it fixed under the Company's seal in some eminent place, for all to take notice at such time as both the heathen themselves, as well as our people, may take notice of it. And for the avoiding of the hurt that may follow through our much familiarity with the Indians, we conceive it fit that they be not permitted to come to your plantation, but at certain times and places to be appointed them. If any of the savages pretend right of inheritance to all or any part of the lands granted in our patent, we pray you endeavour to purchase their title, that we may avoid the least scruple of intrusion.” — p. 159.

In the second general letter of instructions sent by the court to Endicott, this injunction is twice repeated in the most express terms, and with an evident desire for Christian justice. Again, in the “ General Considerations for planting New England,” with answers to objections, we find a full explanation and defence of the conduct of the colonists towards the Indians.

The explicit and reiterated commands of the court were obeyed most scrupulously by the authorities and the people here. The property and rights of the Indians were respected ; they were honorably dealt by ; and it is certain, that, if some parcels of land were held by the whites without a purchase, other portions were paid for more than once. The first President Adams asserted, that, in all his practice at the bar, he “ never knew a contested title to lands, but what was traced up to the Indian title.” Our old records are filled with Indian deeds, and a fair equivalent was paid for them. We find in Dudley's Letter to the Countess of Lincoln, that Sagamore John and one of his subjects required satisfaction for the burning of two of their empty

wigwams, one of which was accidentally set on fire by a servant of Sir Richard Saltonstall, who had sought shelter in it. The court ordered full payment for both. Our records likewise abound in restitutive acts like this. The truth is, there were but very few Indians about the Bay, and the lands here were of little value to them, while their own claim was doubtful. No charge of injustice, we are satisfied, can be brought against the settlers on this score. We shall not meddle with their open wars.

A second matter of censure found against our fathers is drawn from the story of Roger Williams, as it has been of late frequently told. Of course, the volume before us contains no narrative of his controversy with Massachusetts, but it does contain nearly all the papers necessary for deciding the merits of that controversy. Roger Williams, a pure-minded, high-souled, and earnest man, came hither, not as one of the company, nor by their invitation, but as a refugee for conscience, and to exercise a mission of love. After some lesser troubles at Plymouth and Salem, he involved himself in a strife, on three important points, with the government. He objected to the validity of the charter, to the freeman's oath, and to the power of the magistrate in matters of religion. Now, by questioning the charter, either as given by the monarch, or as ratified in fact by rights purchased of the Indians, he struck at the very root of all government, and brought the colony into peril of anarchy, while he opposed the universally recognized and only possible rule of international relations, which allowed discovery to be the first, and purchase a second, condition for the possession of a savage region. By contesting the freeman's oath, he claimed that the private property and the institutions established by the Massachusetts Company should lie at the mercy of any one who chose to come hither and refuse to comply with the terms on which a freeman's or voter's privilege might be enjoyed. By resisting the civil support of religion and the compulsory maintenance of ministers, he attempted to break the contracts under which the mutually pledged ministers and people had sought these regions. The *Chronicles* will abundantly illustrate these three points of controversy. We may question the wisdom of our ancestors in either matter, but there can scarce be a question whether they were right or wrong in holding to their own.

We would not detract one whit from the high encomiums which have been lavished upon the founder of Rhode Island ; but we are concerned that his seditious and contentious spirit in matters of civil and mercantile contracts should not be represented as a protest of conscience against a band of persecutors. Had he been allowed perfect freedom, not only of judgment, but of conduct, according to his views on the three points just adverted to, there could have been no government in this colony, save such as might be set up from time to time by the will of a majority independently of their interest in the stock and expense of the enterprise. The patent obtained by the colonists gave them only a prior right over other foreigners, and they confirmed it here by actual purchase from the Indians. When Roger Williams was opposing the support of the ministry by taxation, he was asked, "What ! is not the laborer worthy of his hire ?" He replied, "Yes ! from those that hire him." This reply has been quoted and commended as very apt and decisive on his side. But to us it seems evasive and not pertinent, for the simple reason, that the colonists had hired the ministers by stipulated contracts, and all who joined the colony, whether as servants or masters, became parties to its agreements. The trials of Roger Williams in his isolation and his wilderness journey have been treated with some little help of romance. But after all, how much did he suffer of actual privation, anxiety, or risk, more than others of the adventurers ?

The last of the three most common imputations cast upon the fathers of Massachusetts is the general charge of what is called *cant*. They are often described, according to the sense in which Dryden uses the word *cant*, and according to its most general use, as making "a whining pretension to goodness," — as wearing sanctimonious visages, talking after a godly strain, measuring the worth of prayers by their length, and devouring widows' houses with craving appetites, while they forsook no sin of heart or life. Their detractors, indeed, have endeavoured to fix the meaning of the word *cant* as expressive of Puritan language and deportment. Now we should be willing to subject these their authentic writings to the severest scrutiny of the most zealous hater of cant in all its significations, and wait for any specimen which can be produced from them. The large mass of all the records



from their pens in the State archives, in public cabinets, and in church registers, have passed under our eyes ; and if they have one striking characteristic common to them all, it consists in this, — that they are perfectly free from *cant*. Considering how much these men endured for their religion, that religion was to them their only bond of union, and that its services and interests were their all-absorbing concerns, we stand amazed at the entire freedom of their records from all obtrusive and offensive suggestions of their piety. Let their memorials be contrasted with certain newspapers, missionary reports, and statements of philanthropic operations and benevolent gifts of the present time, and we will leave all candid persons to judge whether there was more of cant in the piety, self-devotion, and trials of our fathers, than there is in the sentimental and coxcomb-like pretensions of boasted good deeds in this age of rioting plenty. There is undoubtedly such a thing as cant, but it is a self-detecting, self-exposing folly. It does not show itself in the records of the Puritans, — we do not believe that it constituted their piety.

We close with a renewed expression of our obligations to Mr. Young for all his labors in deciphering, collating, and illustrating the Chronicles of the Pilgrim Fathers. They had a full reward in their own day, because it was a reward of the kind which they desired, and with which they were satisfied. We love to pay them the only tribute in our power, — that of renewed epitaphs.

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## ART. X. — CRITICAL NOTICES.

1. — *Arithmetic, in two Parts : Part I. Advanced Lessons in Mental Arithmetic ; Part II. Rules and Examples for Practice in Written Arithmetic.* By FREDERICK A. ADAMS, Principal of Dummer Academy. Lowell : Daniel Bixby. 1846. 12mo. pp. 212.

To the late Warren Colburn belongs the high credit of first introducing into our schools, through his admirable First Lessons, the regular study of mental arithmetic. Of this excellent little manual, the author of the book before us justly observes, that so completely has it performed the work within its prescribed